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Lowry to hold POW/MIA vigil

DENVER – To commemorate National POW/MIA Recognition Day, military and civilian employees will hold a 24-hour Prisoner of War/Missing in Action vigil at the Air Reserve Personnel Center's Lowry flag pole beginning Thursday.

Volunteers from the Defense Finance and Accounting Service, 4th Manpower Requirements Squadron and the Air Reserve Personnel Center will open the event with a ceremony at 2:45 p.m. Thursday, when they set up a POW/MIA table. (see Attachment 1)

Immediately following the ceremony, they will start reading the names of more than 10,000 people listed as POW/MIA from the Cold War to current operations. The reading will continue over the 24-hour period.

The vigil will conclude with a formal retreat ceremony at 3 p.m. Friday where they will lower the POW/MIA flag (see Attachment 2). There will be two military formations and one civilian formation.

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Any media who would like to attend or who require more information can contact the Air Reserve Personnel Center Public Affairs office at 303-676-6515.

Attachment 1 – POW/MIA table presentation meaning

Attachment 2 - History of The Vietnam War POW/MIA Flag

ATTACHMENT 1

POW/MIA Presentation Table

The POW/MIA presentation table is set for one. The military caste is filled with symbolism. This table is our way of symbolizing the fact that members of our profession of arms are missing from our midst. They are commonly called, POW/MIA, we call them brothers. They are unable to be with their loved ones and families tonight, so we join together to pay our humble tribute to them, and bear witness to their continued absence.

This table set for one is small, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner alone against his oppressors. Remember!

The tablecloth is white, symbolizing the purity of their intentions to respond to their country's call to arms. Remember!

The single red rose, displayed in a vase, reminds us of the life of each of the missing, and the[ir] loved ones and friends of these Americans who keep the faith, awaiting answers. Remember!

The red ribbon tied so prominently on the vase is reminiscent of the red ribbon worn upon the lapel and breasts of thousands who bear witness to their unyielding determination to demand a proper accounting of our missing. Remember!

A slice of lemon on the bread plate is to remind us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land. Remember!

A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears endured by those missing and their families who seek answers. Remember!

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, founded as one nation under God. Remember!

The glass is inverted - they cannot toast with us this night. Remember!

The chair is empty - they are not here. Remember!

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors, to the open arms of a grateful nation. Remember!

Let us pray to the supreme commander that all of our comrades will soon be back within our ranks. Remember!

Let us remember and never forget their sacrifices.

May God forever watch over them and protect them and their families.

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN SO LONG AS THERE IS ONE LEFT IN WHOM YOUR MEMORY REMAINS. (*Courtesy of <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/powday/index.htm>*)

ATTACHMENT 2

The History of The Vietnam War POW/MIA Flag

In 1971, Mrs. Mary Hoff, an MIA wife and member of the National League of American Prisoners and Missing in Southeast Asia, recognized the need for a symbol of our POW/MIAs. Prompted by an article in the Jacksonville, Florida TIMES-UNION, Mrs. Hoff contacted Norman Rivkees, Vice-President of Annin & Company which had made a banner for the newest member of the United Nations, the People's Republic of China, as a part of their policy to provide flags to all UN member nations.

Mrs. Hoff found Mr. Rivkees very sympathetic to the POW/MIA issue, and he, along with Annin's advertising agency, designed a flag to represent our missing men. Following League approval, the flags were manufactured for distribution.

The flag is black, bearing in the center, in black and white, the emblem of the League. The emblem is a white disk bearing in black silhouette the bust of a man, watch tower with a guard holding a rifle, and a strand of barbed wire; above the disk are the white letters POW and MIA framing a white 5-pointed star; below the disk is a black and white wreath above the white motto YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

Concerned groups and individuals have altered the original POW/MIA Flag many times; the colors have been switched from black with white - to red, white and blue, -to white with black; the POW/MIA has at times been revised to MIA/POW.

Such changes, however, are insignificant. The importance lies in the continued visibility of the symbol, a constant reminder of the plight of America's POW/MIA'S.

On March 9, 1989, a POW/MIA Flag, which flew over the White House on the 1988 National POW/MIA Recognition Day, was installed in the United States Capitol Rotunda as a result of legislation passed overwhelmingly during the 100th session of Congress. The leadership of both Houses hosted the installation ceremony in a demonstration of bipartisan congressional support.

This POW/MIA Flag, the only flag displayed in the United States Capitol Rotunda, stands as a powerful symbol of our national commitment to our POW/MIAs until the fullest possible accounting for Americans still missing in Southeast Asia has been achieved. (*Courtesy of <http://www.dtic.mil/dpmo/powday/index.htm>*)